



Bournemouth Hospital Cancer Patient Support

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Hints and tips

Getting There

By car:

The hospital entrance is situated off Castle Lane East at The Cooperdean Roundabout. For sat nav users the postcode is BH7 7DW.

TIPS

* If your appointment is between 8am - 9am, 3pm – 4pm or 5pm - 6pm allow more time as this is peak traffic time and the road gets very busy.

By Bus:

Yellow Buses - For routes and timetables contact Yellow Buses on 01202 636000 or visit their website at www.yellowbuses.co.uk

Wilts and Dorset Buses - For routes and timetables contact Wilts and Dorset Buses on 01202 673555 or visit their website at www.morebus.co.uk

PTS (Patient Transport Services) supplied by E-zec:

This is a free service for those who are eligible. You must be registered with a Dorset GP and there is a strict criteria that you must meet before being eligible. For example if you require extra support during or after the journey or if travelling any other way would affect your health. Contact PTS to check your eligibility.

This is a door to door service but as it runs on a circuit, it means that waiting times for the return journey are variable.

Contact number: 0300 777 5555 option 1 (Mon-Fri 08:00 – 18:00)

Streamline Taxies Patient Car Service:

This is a private taxi company running a discounted fixed price, provided by a booking service. Currently costs for a single trip range from £5 to £13.75 depending upon the length of the journey.

Contact number: 01202 671993 and quote “Car Service” for more details.

SEDCAT (South East Dorset Community Accessible Transport) Hospital Hop Service:

This is a local community transport charity offering a door to door, wheelchair accessible shuttle service for patients to the Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals, picking up from the BH1 to BH11 areas. It has a low cost, fixed return fare of just £9, which is paid to the driver. Bookings need to be made in advance and can be done by telephone on 01202 399771. Some costs are refundable by the NHS so keep your receipt.

Please note that SEDCAT are not NHS providers and are not able to confirm whether you are eligible for the refund or how much of your costs will be refunded.

TIPS

- * The PTS option is free but not everyone will fit its criteria. It is ideal and should be the first port of call for those who may require additional support because of medical or mobility issues. However, there can be long waiting times to return which can be quite frustrating.
- * SEDCAT is the cheapest and most efficient option for those simply wishing to attend an appointment and return home as quickly as possible. SEDCAT is a good local charity running an excellent service.

Parking

At The Royal Bournemouth Hospital there are three main car parks:

Car Park A - located at the front of the hospital opposite the main entrance.

Car Park B - located at the side of the hospital

Car Park C - located at the rear of the hospital by the Eye Unit, Jigsaw Unit and Derwent Centre (this is the best car park to use for most of your appointments)

You will receive a ticket at the barriers on entry and payment is made at the pay stations before you return to your car. These pay stations accept coins, notes and card payments.

The ticket returned to you at the pay station is used at the car park exit to raise the barrier.

TIPS

- * If you are going for chemotherapy or oncology appointments in The Jigsaw Unit car parking is free. You still have to get a ticket on entry to the car park, but this is handed in at The Jigsaw reception, where it will be exchanged for a pre-paid ticket.
- * If possible, avoid visiting hours as the car parks get full up and it can be very difficult to find a space. Visiting hours at Royal Bournemouth Hospital are variable depending on the ward. (Please check on the hospital website for different ward visiting times). However, the most popular times seem to be between 2pm and 8pm. Allow an extra 30 minutes to park. If you are early you can always relax in the café area rather than arriving late and being stressed about parking and being late for your appointment.

*For most cancer related appointments the most convenient car park is probably Car Park C at the rear, as it is closest to The Jigsaw Unit and handy for the Pathology Department if you need to have a blood test.

Oncology Appointments

As a cancer patient you will have regular oncology appointments to speak with your Oncologist. These are generally held in the Jigsaw Unit which can be found at the rear of the Hospital and is very clearly signposted. Access is through the units own entrance which is right next to the main rear entrance of the Hospital.

On your appointment day simply book yourself in at the main reception in the unit and they will ask you to wait in the designated waiting area and someone will come and get you when they are ready for you (usually your Oncologist).

TIPS

- * The best place to park is Car Park C at the rear of the hospital.
- * It can sometimes be quite a wait and often, particularly for Pre-Chemotherapy meetings, you will have two parts to your meeting. One will be for Pre-Chemotherapy checks (i.e. blood pressure, weight and height) and the other will be the meeting with your Oncologist, so take something to read or do whilst you are waiting.
- * If arranging transport to pick you up make sure it is flexible to allow for possible waiting times so that you are not having to wait around for a long time after your meeting.
- * Write down any questions you have for your Oncologist and/or take someone with you who will ask the questions you may have forgotten.
- * Don't be afraid to ask as many questions as you need to. The Oncologist is very happy to help and would prefer you to be fully engaged.

Treatment

Blood Tests

Cancer patients regularly need to have a blood test, which is usually done in the Pathology Department in the West Wing of the hospital on the ground floor.

Access to this department is either from the side of the hospital through the main Outpatients Department (from Car Park B), or via the rear of the building through the rear main entrance (from Car Park C).

This is generally a non-appointment service. However, if you are needing a Pre-Chemotherapy blood test it is possible to make a fast track appointment for the day of your Chemotherapy. This can be done by contacting the department on 01202 704781.

When you arrive take a ticket, which will have a number on it. This is your place number and will be shown on the screen in the waiting room when it is your turn. It will also show you which number cubicle to go to in order to have your blood test.

TIPS

- * It is no longer possible to get a fast track appointment other than on the day of your Chemotherapy and it is suggested allowing around 3 hours for the results to come through. Please factor this in and allow plenty of time if you have a fast track appointment on the day of your treatment.
- * For example, if you have a morning chemotherapy appointment it may be best to get your blood test done the day before or even a couple of days before. However, make sure you tell them what it is for so that the results are ready on your treatment day.
- * Whilst this department is always fairly busy, experience has shown that it is generally busy in the mornings, but can be a little quieter after lunch. If you want the chance of spending less time waiting then going in the afternoon can often be the better option.
- * Be prepared for some sort of wait and take something to read. If you want to use a smartphone or tablet please note that it is often difficult to access the hospital Wi-Fi or get a mobile phone signal. A book or magazine may well be a better option and help during your wait.
- * If arranging transport to pick you up make sure it is flexible to allow for possible waiting times so that you are not waiting around for a long time after your blood test.

CT & MRI Scans

As a cancer patient you may well need to have regular scans, either CT or MRI scans, so it is important to plan for these.

These are carried out in the MRI/CT Scanner unit, which is located on the ground floor through the main Hospital front entrance. It is the first department on your left, as you turn left inside the main entrance foyer into the West Wing.

When you arrive book in at the department reception, who will direct you to the waiting area. When they are ready for you they will come and get you, calling out your name.

Generally they are quite quick in this department, and whilst there may be a wait it is usually not too bad. This does, however, depend on any emergencies that they may have in, which can of course impact on waiting times.

For either scans you may be asked to drink a couple of cups of water, this is normal practice and helps with the scan.

When you are called through you will generally be asked to change into a gown, which they will supply, and depending on the scan you may need to have a cannula fitted, as they may need to inject a fluid into your system during the scan. This is not a painful procedure and is designed to help the scan results.

MRI and CT Scans are different so your experience will depend upon which scan you have.

The CT Scan is generally shorter, and is where you lay down and the scanner arch goes over you. It is a painless and quieter process.

The MRI scan is where you lay inside the scanner unit, which then scans your body. This process can be longer and is quite noisy but not painful. You will be given earphones to deaden the noise and so that you can hear any instructions. If you wish, they will also play you music throughout the process.

Once the process is complete you will be asked to sit down for a short while, just to make sure you are ok. If you have had a cannula fitted this will be removed and once you have changed you are free to go.

Please note that you will not be given any results on the day, as these will be referred to your consultant.

TIPS

- * Allow plenty of time to get to your appointment, especially if it is during the busier hours of the hospital.
- * As you may have a long wait, take something to read or do whilst you are waiting. Please note that getting a mobile phones signal is not always easy in the hospital. There is hospital Wi-Fi, which in this department seems ok.
- * Please make sure you read the leaflet/booklet that is sent with your appointment letter, as this contains valuable information especially around what you should or should not eat or drink leading up to your scan appointment. This is very important.
- * If arranging transport to pick you up make sure it is flexible to allow for possible waiting times so that you are not waiting around for a long time after your scan.

Chemotherapy

For many Cancer patients Chemotherapy is a crucial part of their treatment. At Bournemouth Hospital this is mainly carried out in The Jigsaw Unit, which can be found at the rear of the Hospital and is very clearly signposted. Access is through the units own entrance, right next to the main rear entrance.

On your appointment day simply book yourself in at the main reception in the unit and they will come and get you when they are ready for you.

Whilst you will have an appointment time, you may not go in at that time because the nature of the unit means that often there are delays. Please be patient, as they will not keep you waiting any longer than is necessary.

There are many different Chemotherapy treatments depending on your own treatment plan, so times in the unit for outpatient Chemotherapy treatment can be variable from just a few hours to most of the day.

The staff will make you as comfortable as possible before administering treatment and look after you throughout.

You can also take someone in with you who can stay throughout. For example, a family member or friend. Generally, tea/coffee/cold drinks and often snacks are brought round the ward for those who want it. Once your treatment is over it is important that you have someone to pick you up, as you will not be able to drive or want to drive.

Before you go you will be given various tablets and medicines to help with any side effects you may have. The nurse looking after you will explain all this to you before you leave. They will also make appointments for your next sessions, if required, for both your Oncologists Pre-Chemotherapy appointment and for your Chemotherapy appointment

TIPS

- * The best place to park is Car Park C at the rear of the hospital.
- * As mentioned previously, car parking is free for Chemotherapy appointments so ensure that any car parking ticket is handed in at reception and exchanged for a pre-paid one. This also applies to those picking you up.
- * Once in the Jigsaw Unit it is very difficult to get a phone signal, so if you need to call someone ask one of the staff or reception to do it for you (for example, arranging to be picked up).
- * Take something to read, look at or listen to (including headphones) as you could be there for many hours. You could also take a drink but water is available and tea/coffee is brought round.
- * For certain types of Chemotherapy, the cold can really have an effect so take something warm including a scarf, hat and gloves for when you leave in the really cold months.
- * It is also important to read any literature that may have been sent to you by the hospital with your appointment letter, so you have a good understanding of what you need to do and what will happen on the day.
- * When you are booking or arranging transport make sure it is flexible to pick you up outside of the anticipated time, as often treatment times go on much longer than expected (often due to delays). Check with those picking you up that they can be flexible.
- * If you feel nervous take a family member or friend in for company and support, particularly the first time.

Always carry your NHS RBCH Haematology/Oncology Unit card with you as this details your name, hospital number, consultant and treatment as well as all the emergency and hotline numbers. The card also tells you any reasons why you may need to ring.

The information in this pack is accurate at the time of printing but hospital systems are always subject to change. If you find that there are any such changes please contact one of the Champions. We hope that this information is helpful and if you want to talk to anyone about your experiences please let the surgery know and we can arrange for a Champion to contact you.